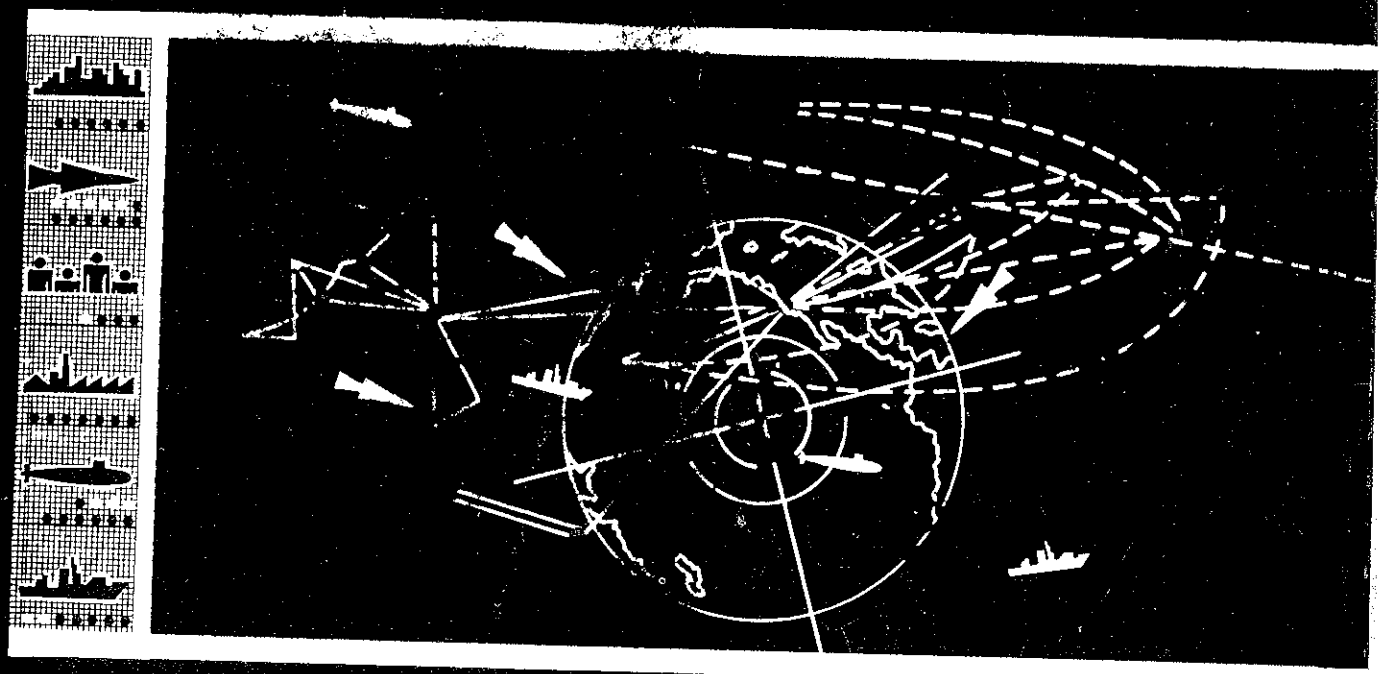
AMERICAN L·A·K·E

Nuclear Peril in the Pacific



How the nuclear build-up in the cause of 'peace' fuels the threat of war.

HAYES · ZARSKY · BELLO

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All are research principals for Nautilus Pacific Research, a public-interest organization which focuses on strategic, political and nuclear issues in Asia and the Pacific.

American Lake is the first title in The Penguin Asia–Pacific Series, published under the general editorship of Alfred W. McCoy.

"Tomcats" fly over USS *Nimitz* in the Indian Ocean, May 1980
(U.S. Navy)

Peter Hayes
Lyuba Zarsky Walden Bello

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AMERICAN LAKE ☆

A fortified position on Quemoy Island.
In the distance is the China mainland. 1955
(Pentagon Archives)

PREFACE

There are some roads not to follow; some troops not to strike; some cities not to assault; and some ground which should not be contested.

– Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 400 BC

The superpowers are on the road toward nuclear war. While everyone's future is at stake, few people know the full extent of the nuclear peril. Even fewer have any say in military strategy. In the nuclear era, the art of war must become the subject of urgent public enquiry, education and discussion.

This book tells the story of American and Soviet plans for nuclear war in the Pacific. It reveals that the superpowers are locked in a nuclear arms race in the region – a race which could trigger a global nuclear war. Indeed, recent changes in superpower military strategy and force deployments have made it as likely that World War III could break out in the Pacific as in Europe or the Middle East.

Written for the novice, this is a big book – because it has to be. The key arguments, however, are summarized in the Introduction and the more technical material has been relegated to appendices.

The United States was the first to use and deploy nuclear weapons in the Pacific. Part I, "Manifest Destiny," describes U.S. nuclear strategy in the Pacific from the administration of Harry Truman in the late 1940s to that of Ronald Reagan in the 1980s. We demonstrate that nuclear weapons were rapidly integrated into the new "forward-based" U.S.

military strategy in the Pacific after World War II, in part to compensate for overextended conventional forces (Chapters 2, 3).

Part I also discloses that the United States came perilously close – much closer than is commonly known – to launching nuclear attacks on Korea and China in the 1950s (Chapters 3, 4, 5). After a short period of American military withdrawal from the region following defeat in Vietnam (Chapter 6), the Pentagon reasserted and upgraded the strategic role of the Pacific (Chapter 7). Centered primarily on the Navy, the renewed U.S. regional build-up relies heavily on nuclear weapons. In the 1980s as in the 1950s, nuclear war in the Pacific has again become "thinkable" – at least in the minds of American nuclear warplanners (Chapter 8).

The second part of the book surveys American and Soviet forces, nuclear and "conventional", in the Pacific. While nuclear and non-nuclear forces can be distinguished for the sake of analysis, they are deeply integrated at the level of hardware, deployment and strategy. This "deadly connection" must be understood to comprehend the nuclear peril in the Pacific (Chapter 9).

American nuclear-capable naval, air, and land forces span the vast Pacific Command from Hawaii to the African seaboard (Chapter 10). These forces are supported by an "invisible arsenal" of communication and intelligence facilities (Chapter 11).

Despite the recent build-up, U.S. forces remain overextended in the volatile Asian region – their potential interventionary tasks far exceeding their capabilities. As a result, the U.S. military leans more and more heavily on nuclear weapons to project power in the region in order to contain social revolution and to intimidate the Soviet Union (Chapter 12). The MX, Trident and anti-ballistic missile tests over the ever-expanding Pacific Missile Range (Chapter 13) and the dangerous new Tomahawk cruise missile are central components of American striving for nuclear superiority (Chapter 14).

The exercise of American power in the Pacific rests largely on the support of regional allies. Allies not only host forward-deployed American forces; they also provide political legitimacy for the U.S. military role in the region. Pacific Command sponsors dozens of joint military exercises with Pacific allies and relies heavily on allied airfields and ports for transiting warplanes and warships (Chapter 15).

The nuclear peril in the Pacific cannot be understood by ignoring the Soviet Union. Soviet non-nuclear forces in the Pacific cannot match

those of the U.S. (Chapter 16). But the Soviet Union compensates for its relative political, economic and military weakness by deploying a huge nuclear arsenal in its Far East. The core of this force is the expanding force of Asian-based SS-20 missiles (Chapter 17). When threatened, the Soviets point to this sledgehammer and emphasize that they will use nuclear weapons to respond to any American attack on their homeland.

Lodged between these nuclear giants, the Pacific is trapped in a "state of terror". It would certainly be crushed in any nuclear war between the superpowers (Chapter 18). Under what conditions might American and Soviet fingers pull their nuclear hair-triggers in the Pacific and ignite a global nuclear war?

We present such a scenario in Chapter 19, centered on the tense Korean peninsula. Although it is fictional, the scenario combines actual events with current doctrines and deployments, weaving together information presented in preceding chapters. Like good science fiction, it carries current trends in the Pacific to their logical conclusion - from the preparation for to the actuality of nuclear war.

The logic of the day, however, is not irreversible. Nuclear war in the Pacific can be averted. In Part III, "Charting a New Pacific", we argue that the most promising path to peace is to physically disengage U.S. and Soviet nuclear forces from the region. This approach grows out of initiatives already taken in New Zealand and other nations who have closed their lands and waters to nuclear forces. Most urgent in Korea, such nuclear-free zones could eventually encompass the entire Pacific.

We have taken great care throughout the book to document our arguments. Many of our sources were provided by various offices and branches of the U.S. military. An enormous amount of information is available in the public domain to those willing to dig for it.

In its raw form, such information is often incomprehensible to the uninitiated. Indeed, this book is in large part a translation of military jargon into plain English. Take, for example, a recently released document which states that Pacific Command's Nuclear Operations and Safety Division:*

* This and subsequent quotations are from Commander-in-Chief Pacific, *Organization and Functions Manual, FY 1984*, CINCPAC instruction 5400.6K, December 5, 1985, p. 75 and *passim*; released under the Freedom of Information Act to Peter Wills.

Develops J3 inputs for updating nuclear annexes of USCINCPAC OPLANS and CONPLANS; reviews and prepares comments and component and subordinate unified command nuclear annexes and strike plans.

This terse sentence reveals that Pacific Command is planning and preparing to fight a nuclear war in the Pacific.

We could not have written this book without the uniquely democratic U.S. Freedom of Information Act, which allowed us to pry loose many important documents. Even after security deletions, these documents provided crucial insights into American nuclear warplanning in the Pacific. As the book went to press, for example, we discovered that Pacific Command maintains an astonishing array of organizations devoted solely to nuclear war activity at its headquarters in Hawaii. Particularly important is the Nuclear Operations Team, which works out of the Nuclear Operations Center.* This Center apparently coordinates all of Pacific Command's nuclear warplanning activities.

The document also revealed that Pacific Command maintains a newly created Cruise Missile Branch, which plans attacks for the newly deployed Tomahawk cruise missiles. The Branch also runs the Nuclear Contingency Planning System, which provides "preplanned and adaptively planned theatre nuclear options."

While such organizations are not new to Pacific Command, the bureaucracy of nuclear warfighting has proliferated since Reagan came to power. One example is the office devoted to nuclear war communications in the Pacific, known as the Strategic Systems Branch. This Branch aims to construct a "survivable" system to enable Pacific Command to communicate reliably "to its nuclear forces during a protracted nuclear conflict".

While such disclosures help to fill in the information gaps, we continue to know little about the inner sanctums of American nuclear warplanners in the Pacific. We know even less about their Soviet (or Chinese) counterparts. Much more research is needed before we will fully understand the nuclear peril in the Pacific.

* Known members of the Nuclear Operations Team at Pacific Command are: Nuclear Operations and Safety Division, SSBN (Ballistic Missile Submarines) Operations Branch, Nuclear Safety/Security Branch, Permissive Action Link Management Control Branch, Nuclear Operations Procedures Branch, and the Automatic Data Processing Support Branch.

We regret that the Soviet Union hampers this effort at public education and official accountability by denying access to information on its nuclear and military affairs. The information access policies of U.S. allies in the Pacific are typically not much better than those of the Soviets, with controls ranging from anti-democratic to totalitarian.

Many people helped with the information and analysis contained in *American Lake*. Crucial to Parts I and II were the prior work and generous provision of extensive data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute's files on foreign military bases, compiled by Owen Wilkes.

Naka Ishii competently managed the production of the manuscript with cheerful determination. Glenn Ruga artfully produced the maps and graphics. Angela Siscamanis and David Lawrence supplied early research assistance. The Nautilus Board of Directors, Harriet Barlow, David Chatfield, Lenny Siegal, John Steiner, and Isabel Wade, encouraged us to persevere at difficult times.

A project of this type and scale incurs many debts to many people, not all of whom can be named. We would especially like to thank: Gordon Adams, Alan Adler, Glen Alcalay, Bob Aldridge, Jim Albertini, Jim Anthony, Bill Arkin, Tom Athanasiou, Desmond Ball, Neil Barrett, Michael Bedford, Roman Bedor, Ian Bell, Bruce Blair, Elizabeth Bounds, Bob Brower, Jo Camilleri, James Castro, Carl Connetta and South End Press, Wendy Carlin, Peter Chapman, Noam Chomsky, Helen Clark, Bruce Cumings, Christine Dann, David Easter, Maud Easter, Jim Falk, Richard Falk, Tom Fenton, Randall Forsberg, Nelson Foster, Greg Fry, Sandy Galazin, Gary Gamer, Angela Genino, Andrew Glyn, Linda Golley, Stephen Goose, Fay Graef, Eric Guyot, Nicky Hager, Michael Hamel-Green, Pharis Harvey, Robert Hayes, Paul Hutchcroft, Giff Johnson, Aroldo Kaplan, Tetsugi Kawamura, John Kelly, Ingrid Kircher, Michael Klare, Ian Krass, Ed Luidens, Andrew Mack, Arjun Makhijani, Nic McClellan, David Morrison, Frank Muller, Ched Myers, Warren Nelson, Seiko Ohashi, John Pike, Susan Quass, Joel Rocamora, Jeffrey Richelson, Mavis Robertson, Sue Roff, David Rosenberg, Douglas Smith, Bob Steiner, Masafumi Takubo, Richard Tanter, Gordon Thompson, Marian Wilkinson, Peter Wills, Martha Winnaker, John Wiseman, and various Filipino friends who must remain anonymous.

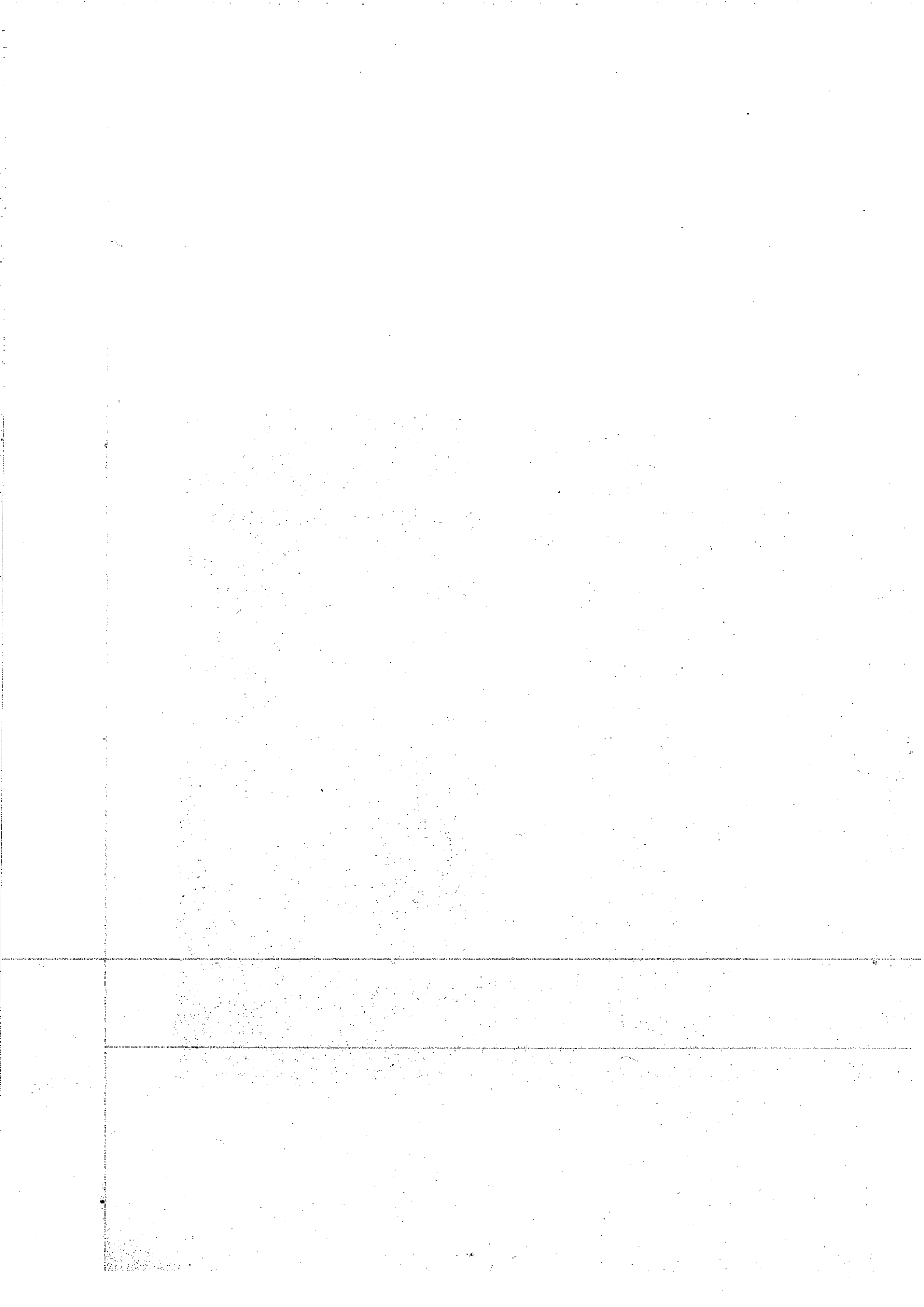
Many civilian and uniformed officials in the various branches of the U.S. military, especially those who staff those in the Freedom of Infor-

mation and Public Affairs Offices, replied to our enquiries with promptness and courtesy.

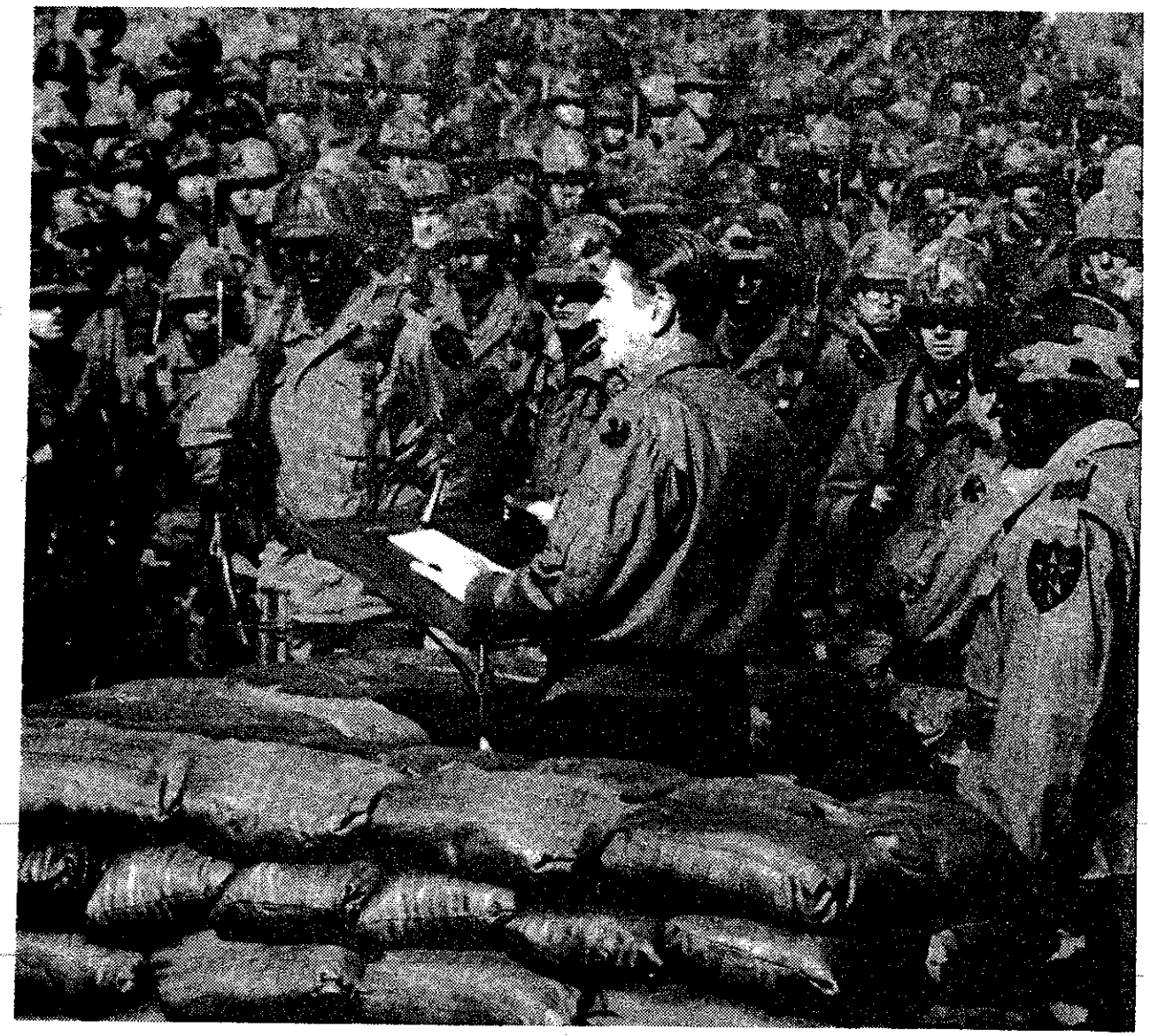
Writing this book cost a lot. We are grateful for the financial support of Carol and Ping Ferry; the Fund for Tomorrow; Jay Harris; George Jay; Richard Parker and the Sunflower Fund; J. Steiner; the United Methodist Church; United Methodist Women; the United Presbyterian Church; and other donors who wish to remain anonymous.

American Lake originated with the new Asia-Pacific series of Penguin Books, Australia. We benefited greatly from the labors of Al McCoy, who edited the manuscript for style, made suggestions for changes in structure, and helped refine some of the concepts in the book. Brian Johns and John Curtain also loaned a patient hand at crucial times, ensuring that the book did not run aground.

Finally, this book owes an incalculable debt and is dedicated to the thousands of people on many continents who are working toward a peaceful, nuclear-free and independent Pacific.



U.S. President Ronald Reagan at the DMZ, Korea, 1984
(Pentagon)



POISONED REIGN

French nuclear colonialism in the Pacific

Bengt Danielsson
Marie Thérèse Danielsson

Since 1966, France has used Moruroa, a small atoll in the Pacific, as the testing site for its nuclear bombs – despite opposition from both the Polynesian people and nations throughout the world. In the meantime, levels of radioactive fallout and sea contamination, and the extent of damage to Moruroa itself, have remained a closely-guarded secret.

Poisoned Reign traces the history of French nuclear involvement in the Pacific. It also shows how the tests have been used to strengthen colonial rule in French Polynesia – and this at a time when all British colonies in the Pacific have won their independence.

Bengt and Marie-Thérèse Danielsson, who have carried out anthropological researches in the Pacific and lived in Tahiti since 1949, have personally witnessed many of the events in this book, and have made careful use of documentary material. The result is a damning exposé of French nuclear colonialism.

First published in 1977 under the title *Moruroa, Mon Amour*, this enlarged, updated edition includes a foreword by Chris Masters, who investigated the *Rainbow Warrior* affair in his award-winning documentary, 'French Connections.'

'Viewed in exclusion, the Rainbow Warrior affair does seem bizarre. Viewed, however, in the context of French Polynesian history as revealed in this book, it is not so surprising'.

Chris Masters from the Foreword

NO CONCEIVABLE INJURY

Robert Milliken

Hot debate still surrounds the presence of foreign military projects in Australia. In the 1950s no Australian – including the prime minister, Robert Menzies – knew the full facts about the British atomic tests. In line with Australia's long and continuing compliance with the war strategies of allies, Menzies was eager to assist Britain's efforts to develop its own bomb.

Australian journalist Robert Milliken traces the remarkable behind-the-scenes drama of the tests at Maralinga, Emu Field and Monte Bello and shows how public announcements differed from what really went on. The trail of deception covered up the danger to Aborigines and servicemen as atomic clouds drifted across the outback.

More than thirty years later governments in Britain and Australia are faced with the problems raised by a lengthy Royal Commission into the tests. The sites are still contaminated and victims of radioactivity – and their widows – are claiming compensation.

This book confronts the issues from the past and raises the chilling question of what we are not told about defence installations today.

TAKING AUSTRALIA OFF THE MAP

Jim Falk

Nuclear weapons technology is undergoing a revolution. Nothing – explosive power, range, accuracy, or command and control – remains unchanged. The delicate balance which has deterred the threat of nuclear war for three decades is coming unstuck.

Australians are stirring in urgent curiosity as the impending danger is recognised. Are the consequences of nuclear war as dire for Australia as for the rest of the world?

Jim Falk reveals simply, unemotionally and with authority the chilling facts surrounding the impact of nuclear war on Australia.

'a sober examination of the history of nuclear arms, the development of the arms race, Australia's defence policies and the international nuclear industry' The *Age*

'I urge everyone to get a copy of *Taking Australia Off the Map*. It provides a complete and authoritative account of the nuclear issue and what it means for Australians . . . essential reading' Peter Garrett

'technically sophisticated yet comprehensible to the general reader' *Weekend Australian*

'encourages hope and creativity and gives informed substance to the desire for peace' *Disarming News*

CONFRONTING THE FUTURE

Charles Birch

If man is to survive, a fundamental transformation must take place in Western civilization. The question is: *can* man control himself and the technology he has created?

It is quite possible that the vital answers to survival in the twenty-first century are not going to come from the great nations that have ruled the world in our time but from the frontier countries which have the advantage of still being in search of their identity and their role. Australia could have a crucial function in determining man's future – the possibility for change is perhaps greater in this country than anywhere else.

In this wise and compassionate book a distinguished and humane scientist argues that there *are* solutions to man's dilemmas, but if we are to survive the next hundred years we must act now.

THE FABRIC OF MIND

Richard Bergland

Richard Bergland's stirring exploration of the brain as a gland will unsettle scientists and doctors, who have long seen the brain as a computer. The 'stuff of thought', he argues, is not electricity but hormones. Every time we move or laugh or cry, hormones spill into our brains, affecting our behaviour. Indeed, it could be said that some thinking goes on outside the brain – in the ovaries and testicles, for example.

Bergland predicts that as a result of their new understanding doctors will measure hormones in the brain and link their deficiencies to specific disorders such as senile dementia, schizophrenia and obesity, offering new and effective treatment for the ill.

Bergland not only argues brilliantly for his revolutionary theory of the brain but also presents an absorbing account of the historical struggle to understand the mysteries of the mind.

'Richard Bergland is in the front rank of brain researchers . . . What is most exciting about their findings is the promise of human growth.'

Norman Cousins

INTRODUCTION ☆ NUCLEAR PERIL IN THE PACIFIC

You cannot help but feel that the great Pacific Basin – with all its nations and all its potential for growth and development – that is the future.

—President Ronald Reagan, August 1984[1]

The United States has made a fundamental decision that we are a Pacific nation, and that we will remain a Pacific power and a force for peace and stability in the region. Our nation's future does indeed lie in the Pacific . . . Let no one misread the past or misjudge our resolve.

—Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinberger, June 1985[2]

For much of the postwar period, the risk of nuclear war in the Pacific has been eclipsed by the nuclear threat in Europe. There the superpowers directly confront each other in a region where both have vital strategic and economic interests. Echoing and reinforcing the general public perception, most analysts and fictional accounts have projected that the spark to ignite nuclear conflagration will be struck in Europe.

But it is just as – perhaps more – likely in coming years that it will be in the Pacific that global nuclear war is triggered. As in Europe, the superpowers confront each other "eyeball-to-eyeball" with nuclear weapons in the Far East. Here, as in Europe, both the United States and the Soviet Union have vital political, economic, and strategic interests. Indeed, it was in the Pacific, not in Europe, that the first atomic bomb was exploded in war.

This book demonstrates that the threat of nuclear war in the Pacific is

great and growing. Many sources – political and institutional, as well as technological, doctrinal, and geographical – pose the peril. First and foremost is the build-up of large, increasingly lethal and accurate Soviet and American nuclear forces in a politically volatile area. While Cold War blocs have remained steady in Europe, they have shifted dramatically in the Pacific. Two major land wars and a host of bloody insurrections and heavily armed repressive governments have erupted in less than half a century. Communist, democratic, and nationalist insurgencies, as well as continuing conflicts between nations, will continue to make the region politically turbulent into the foreseeable future, heightening the possibility of superpower interventions. Should their interventions overlap, the superpowers could clash and escalate to nuclear war.

The U.S. faces fewer constraints on the use of its nuclear weapons in the Pacific than in Europe, where it must consult with a host of allies in the multilateral framework of NATO. In contrast, the U.S. is linked to its Pacific allies via a network of bilateral treaties. It need not seek broad consultation on local deployments and strategy in the Pacific. Furthermore, the opinions of European elites are weighted by deep historical and cultural ties to the U.S., ties which Asian elites lack. And at sea or in the U.S.-controlled Demilitarized Zone in Korea, American actions are wholly unilateral.

Soviet posture and policy in the Pacific also enhance the nuclear peril. Ironically, the danger stems from Soviet weakness in conventional force in the region, which prompts it to rely heavily on nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union uses its huge, primarily land-based nuclear arsenal in the Far East to confront the forward-deployed naval, aerial and land-based nuclear and conventional forces of the U.S.

The Pacific, in short, is deeply and dangerously engulfed in the superpower nuclear arms race. Recent shifts in American warfighting strategy and foreign policy have heightened the nuclear danger in the Pacific.

American Lake

The vast Pacific is an American lake. From Northeast Asia to the South Pacific and the Indian Ocean, American military bases and political alliances assert the regional power of the United States. A huge arsenal

of integrated U.S. conventional and nuclear forces confronts the Soviet Union on its very doorstep in the Far East.

With the "New Militarists" at the helm of state in the U.S., the superpowers are moving closer to the brink of nuclear war in the Pacific. They are closer now than they have been at any time since the 1950s, when the United States nearly launched a nuclear attack on Korea and China.

Who are the "New Militarists"? They are the Cold Warriors who swept into Washington, D.C., in 1981 on the coattails of Ronald Reagan's presidential election. Seeking nuclear superiority, they have chilled relations with the Soviet Union and upgraded the role of nuclear weapons in American military strategy. Many of them are old Cold Warriors, architects of U.S. foreign policy and strategy in Asia in the 1950s, when the U.S. enjoyed nuclear superiority.

Other Cold Warriors such as John Lehman, Reagan's Secretary of the Navy, also seek to restimulate America's appetite for intervention, which waned after U.S. defeat in Vietnam. "For a long while," explained Lehman in 1982, "Americans have been embarrassed rather than excited by the prospect of exerting power abroad. In such exertion we saw entanglement, not a sense of mission; we discerned risk, not opportunity."[3]

In their belligerent thrust into the Pacific, the New Militarists have deployed new nuclear weapons, such as the Tomahawk sea-launched cruise missiles and long-range, submarine-based Trident I missiles. They have also expanded conventional forces and revised U.S. war-fighting strategy and doctrine in ways which enhance the role of the Pacific-based nuclear Navy. In response, the Soviets have further increased their already huge Far Eastern arsenal of medium-range missiles.

Pacific Century

The vigor of the American military push into the Pacific reflects the growing political and economic importance of the Pacific Basin, as well as its strategic role. The world's fastest-growing economies are in East Asia, and by 1983, U.S. trade with Pacific nations outstripped its trade with Europe by a third.[4] Important U.S. corporations such as IBM and Westinghouse find their fastest-growing markets in Asia–Pacific.[5]

American alignment with China as it undertakes "socialist modernization" not only strengthens the U.S. military against the Soviet Union; it also cements Sino–American political relations, potentially opening the door to an economic bonanza.[6]

Some American strategists, especially those close to the Navy, have declared that the U.S is already entering a "Pacific century."[7] Business and military analysts have even suggested that U.S. forces in Europe be redeployed to the Pacific in light of the growing importance of the region.[8] "When we measure the near-unoptimized markets of Europe and its 250 million persons against the 1.5 to 2 billion people of the Pacific Basin alone," argued a 1981 article in the *Wall Street Journal*, "Europe seems a puny affair."[9]

Aware that where there is new wealth, there is rising power, the U.S. State Department takes the view, as one spokesperson put it, that American "economic success in East Asia is a projection of American influence. Consequently, any sign of weakness or lack of competitiveness or incompetence has an important political dimension."[10] To ensure that U.S. foreign policy boosts American economic performance, Reagan has appointed a special roving Ambassador in the Pacific who works closely with the newly formed private U.S. National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation.[11]

According to the New Militarists, American diplomacy and economic influence rest on military muscle. "We have *stability*," former Commander-in-Chief Pacific Admiral William Crowe often emphasized, "and one of the prime reasons that stability – and affluence – have been allowed to develop in an uninterrupted fashion is American military strength."[12]

Indeed, the Pentagon's largest multi-service, unified region of military operations is in the Pacific. Stretching from the Aleutian Islands off the coast of Alaska to China and the Soviet Far East, and encompassing all of the Pacific and Indian Oceans, Pacific Command covers nearly half the surface of the earth. In 1984, the Commander-in-Chief Pacific (CINCPAC) commanded over 320,000 U.S. Army, Navy, Marine and Air Force troops assigned to the Pacific.[13] Since the Pacific is primarily a maritime theater, CINCPAC is by tradition a Navy admiral and the Pacific a Navy precinct.

While they are unlikely to abandon Europe, the New Militarists view the Pacific as a zone of increasing American strategic interests. Richard

Armitage, U.S. Assistant Secretary of Defense and Reagan's 'Pacific Architect" in the Pentagon, explained why in 1985:

> The strategic importance of the Pacific to the United States is attested by the fact that five of our eight mutual security treaties are with nations of the region. The world's six largest armed forces are in the area of responsibility of the United States Pacific Command: those of the Soviet Union, China, Vietnam, India, North Korea, and the United States. Five of these six have been at war within the past 11 years and the sixth is North Korea who, some have said, is at war all the time.[14]

In 1985, the New Militarists spent $47 billion to keep American forces in the West Pacific.*[15] While this represented only about 20 per cent of total U.S. spending on General Purpose Forces, it exceeded the GNP of most countries in East Asia.† It was also two hundred times greater than U.S. economic assistance to East Asia in 1983.[17]

The appointment of Admiral William Crowe, CINCPAC from 1983 to 1985, as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in June of 1985, made it clear that the new emphasis on the Pacific is no passing fad.‡[18] "My trips to Washington", cabled Admiral Crowe from Hawaii in 1984, "have left me with a strong feeling that there is a growing awareness of this region's importance by our National Command Authority as well as service headquarters."[19]

New Militarism in the Pacific

The central aim of the New Militarists is to reassert nuclear and conventional military superiority over the Soviet Union. They can achieve this, they believe, by demonstrating beyond doubt American capability

* Excluding the cost of long-range nuclear forces and communications and intelligence infrastructure.

† The only countries with a GNP larger than U.S. military spending in the region in 1983 or 1984 were China, Japan, south Korea, Indonesia, and Taiwan.[16]

‡ His replacement as CINCPAC was Admiral Ronald Hayes.

and will to fight – and win – a war with the Soviets. To this end, the New Militarists have thrust the Pacific onto the frontlines of nuclear war in two ways.

First, their strategy calls for a *global* war in which the U.S. surrounds the Soviet Union on all sides. In the past, U.S. doctrine rested on the notion that Europe would be the primary war theater. Now, U.S. war-fighting plans are as firmly anchored in the Pacific as in Europe. In wartime, it is just as possible that U.S. forces would swing from Europe to the Pacific as in the opposite direction. Furthermore, if war breaks out in Europe, the Navy may attack the Soviets in the Pacific and *vice versa.* American attacks in the Far East would focus on Vladivostok, home of the Soviet Pacific Fleet.

Second, the New Militarists are equipped and ready to fight a "theater" nuclear war in the Pacific. If war breaks out in volatile Korea, they envisage a nuclear attack limited to the Peninsula. If a naval shoot-out takes place in the North Pacific, they think that they can keep it from spreading from sea to land. This shift toward "limited nuclear war" began well before Reagan's New Militarists took over. But they have refined the doctrine and deployed weapons such as the Tomahawk cruise missile to make it more feasible.

To bolster the overall U.S. military posture, the New Militarists have reinvigorated American forces in the Pacific. In Korea, they have increased Army personnel, and transferred the very latest in aircraft and artillery to U.S. occupation forces. They have revived the Special Forces in Okinawa, beefed up the Marines throughout the region, and expanded bases and stockpiles of the weaponry necessary for punitive strikes. They also undertook a crash build-up of the island base at Diego Garcia to permit the Rapid Deployment Force to focus its firepower on the Indian Ocean region.

Underlying these doctrines and deployments is a geopolitical ideology deeply engrained in the U.S. Navy. In this view, control of the seas – especially the Pacific and the Indian Oceans – is the key to matching Soviet land-based power on the great Eurasian continent. Seapower and the quest for global maritime supremacy have become the keynote of the Reagan military build-up. As Navy Secretary Lehman declared brashly in 1981, "Nothing below clear superiority will suffice." [20]

In the Pacific, the Navy's strategy rests on "offensive defense", that is, projecting its power to the shores of the Soviet Union. Drawing on refurbished battleships and new aircraft carriers, the Pacific armada of

forward-deployed surface warships almost doubled between 1980 and 1983, from twenty-one to forty.*

The biggest increase in American nuclear firepower lies with the Trident I missile aboard Ohio-class submarines. Each submarine can fire twenty-four missiles over 7,700 km to rain 240 warheads within 500 m of targets in the Soviet Union. Trident II, with even greater lethality, will arrive in 1989, threatening Soviet land-based missiles and worsening what Theodore Postol, a former advisor to the U.S. Navy's Nuclear Warfare Division, has called a "pathological instability."[21]

Deployment of the Tomahawk cruise missile is another menacing development in the Pacific. No larger than a sea gull to Soviet radars, the Tomahawk can travel 2,500 km over the sea before exploding a nuclear bomb above Soviet airfields or ports. These targets were formerly inaccessible to American aircraft carriers and warships. By disarming Soviet coastal defenses, the Tomahawk would allow the big U.S. carriers to steam into waters adjacent to the Soviet Far East for subsequent attacks on Soviet land forces or Soviet nuclear missile submarines at sea.

To back up these weapon systems and plans for regional or global war, the U.S. is also "hardening" Pacific-based command, control, and communication posts. If Soviet nuclear weapons rendered these sites inoperative, nuclear commanders and forces would be left deaf, blind and mute. With either or both sides "decapitated", uncontrolled escalation is nearly certain. This gruesome possibility may prompt one side to strike first to "limit" its own damage.

Exercise of Power

Tomahawk and Trident missiles are merely the latest addition to a vast American arsenal comprised of inextricably integrated nuclear and non-nuclear military forces in the Pacific. Nuclear and conventional forces are interlinked not only at the level of technology but of strategy and doctrine as well. "When you go out there and sail your ships and run your tanks and drive your airplanes," emphasized General John Vessey, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, in 1984, "you have

* Including nuclear submarines, the total in the West Pacific rose from thirty-seven in 1980 to fifty-two in 1983.

to recognize that there are nuclear weapons out there. There is no such thing as non-nuclear strategy."[22]

Although the U.S. has not launched a nuclear attack since 1945, it has constantly threatened China, north Korea, Vietnam, and the Soviet Union with nuclear weapons, a practice known as "coercive diplomacy." Naval nuclear weapons are particularly well suited to coercive diplomacy because warships are a very flexible way to establish "presence" and convey "interest", all the while signifying the inconceivable power of the Bomb – the teeth, as the Chinese say, behind the lips.

The allies provide crucial stepping stones for the New Militarists to project power to every corner of Pacific Command's vast domain.* The great naval bases in Japan and the Philippines allow the Navy to wrap a chain of steel around the globe from Hawaii to the Indian Ocean. The bases in Korea, Okinawa, and the Japanese mainland place an iron triangle of U.S. military power on the Soviet doorstep in the North Pacific. Australia, New Zealand, and France, America's junior partners in the Pacific, relieve the U.S of security burdens south of the equator. And virtually every U.S. ally hosts an invisible arsenal of communications and intelligence systems supporting the nuclear arsenal.

Lubricated with military aid and training, warship visits, and joint exercises – all of which have expanded since 1979 – the allies have become more important than ever to the New Militarists. With its commitments and priorities expanding around the globe, the U.S. is pressing its allies to "share the burden." Japan especially is the target of intense American pressure to "remilitarize." Military aid to the "front-line states" – south Korea, Thailand, and the Philippines – has been increased and the U.S. is nudging Southeast Asian nations toward establishing their own mutual defense commitment.

Soviet Lake?

According to the New Militarists, the American build-up in the Pacific merely balances a recent Soviet naval thrust into the region. Indeed, the Navy's rhetoric often borders on the hysterical. "The Pacific moat's integrity", railed a 1985 editorial in *Proceedings*, a prestigious U.S. Navy

* See W. Bello, P. Hayes, and L. Zarsky, *Bases of Power, The Politics of Nuclear Alliance in the Pacific*, forthcoming.

journal, "is being challenged by the Soviet Union and, today, it is a waterway over which the Soviet Pacific Fleet is probing, prowling, and testing."[23] Admiral Sylvester Foley, Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, warned in 1985 that "it could turn into a Soviet lake out there."[24]

In reality, the Soviet strategic position in Asia is bleak, as even senior American commanders admit. The major portion of the Soviet Union's Far East military effort is directed at China, which shares a 7,500 km border with the Soviets. With the U.S. and Western Europe on one side and the U.S., China, and Japan on the other, the Soviet Union is surrounded by hostile powers.

Conventional Soviet military power in the Pacific, as well as Soviet economic and political strength in Asia, pales beside that of the United States and its Pacific allies. The Soviets do not have a single aircraft carrier to match the six U.S. carrier battle groups in the Pacific. Most of its bombers and fighter planes are capable only of territorial defense. Even its air defenses are suspect after their incompetent chase of a lumbering, intruding Korean Airlines jetliner in 1983.

With few forward bases and little forward capability, Soviet military strategy can be summed up as "defensive defense." It is a strategy aimed primarily at facing and countering the "American threat" in the West Pacific. Even Francis J. West, one of the Navy's top analysts, was forced to conclude that the Soviet Navy could not "perform adequately any but its primary mission of homeland defense."[25]

Nonetheless, the Soviets also stand at the nuclear brink in the Pacific, casting a long shadow. To compensate for its weakness in conventional force, the Soviet Union has built a huge, primarily home-based nuclear arsenal which hangs over the region like a giant sledgehammer. While the New Militarists in the White House plan for "limited war", the Soviets repeatedly point to their sledgehammer and emphasize the certainty that it will crush the region in any nuclear war.

While the New Militarists' global strategy, as Admiral James Watkins put it in 1983, keeps the Soviet Union on edge, it also leaves American forces grossly overextended.[26] Simply put, there is a gap between the ever-expanding strategic goals of the U.S. and the means to carry them out. With military commitments and forces strewn from Hawaii all around the globe to Africa, the U.S. may lean over the nuclear brink at the outset of a crisis, whether in Korea, at sea in the North Pacific, or elsewhere. Nuclear war could erupt in a few minutes on the divided

Korean Peninsula, where two heavily armed and hostile states confront each other – and where the U.S. keeps its finger on a nuclear hair trigger.

The gap between the means and ends is the source of the renewed American strategic bias toward nuclear weapons, a posture which increases the risk of superpower combat and a global nuclear war.[27] As the U.S. ups the ante with its naval nuclear deployments, the Soviet Union calls the bet by piling up its home-based arsenal.

These overlapping and interacting nuclear arsenals are the twin sources of nuclear peril in the Pacific. Either side could push the other over the brink into the nuclear abyss.

Charting a New Pacific

The United States and the Soviet Union do not dance on an empty stage in the Pacific. The peoples and nations of the Pacific are deeply entangled in superpower strategy, hosting forward-deployed military forces and receiving visiting warships.

But nuclear deployments, especially the American forces, have evoked far-reaching national and popular opposition in the midst of the American Lake. "The aggressive promotion of nuclear weapons within alliances", declared Helen Clark, Chair of New Zealand's Foreign Affairs and Defence Select Committee, in 1985, "now stands to destroy the alliances themselves."[28]

While Korea smolders, a full-scale insurrection threatens to evict the U.S. from its bases at Subic Bay and Clark Airfield. Further south, fires are also breaking out in what used to be a quiet strategic backwater of Pacific Command. New Zealand has rejected nuclear alliance with the U.S., breaking up the ANZUS pact, while anti-nuclear microstates such as Vanuatu lead the battle to evict French nuclear colonialism from Kanaky (New Caledonia) and French Polynesia. North in Micronesia, the U.S. has been unable to quell anti-nuclear sentiment in Belau. Even in Hawaii, Pacific Command's bastion, native Hawaiians and disarmament activists have fanned the flames by prompting the declaration of whole islands as nuclear-free zones.

Reducing the nuclear threat in the Pacific will require the separating and disengaging of superpower nuclear forces. Since conventional and nuclear forces are deeply integrated, disengagement means withdraw-

ing from the region all offensive superpower forces. To achieve this, the nations of the Pacific will have to enhance their role in Pacific political and military affairs. Nations which serve as platforms for the nuclear arsenals of either superpower can force the superpowers to disengage by posting "Not Welcome" signs to all nuclear forces and creating nuclear-free and non-intervention zones.

The most promising path to reducing the risk of nuclear war, while preserving regional peace, independence and security, is collective action by Pacific nations, especially American allies. Popular movements and some Pacific states have already taken important steps toward disarmament and demilitarization in the Pacific and Indian Oceans. Some states have already closed their ports to nuclear warships, and established national and local nuclear-free zones. Transnational networks have campaigned against regional deployment of weapons such as the Trident and Tomahawk missiles, and proposed zones of neutrality in Southeast Asia and the Indian Ocean and a nuclear-free zone in the South Pacific.

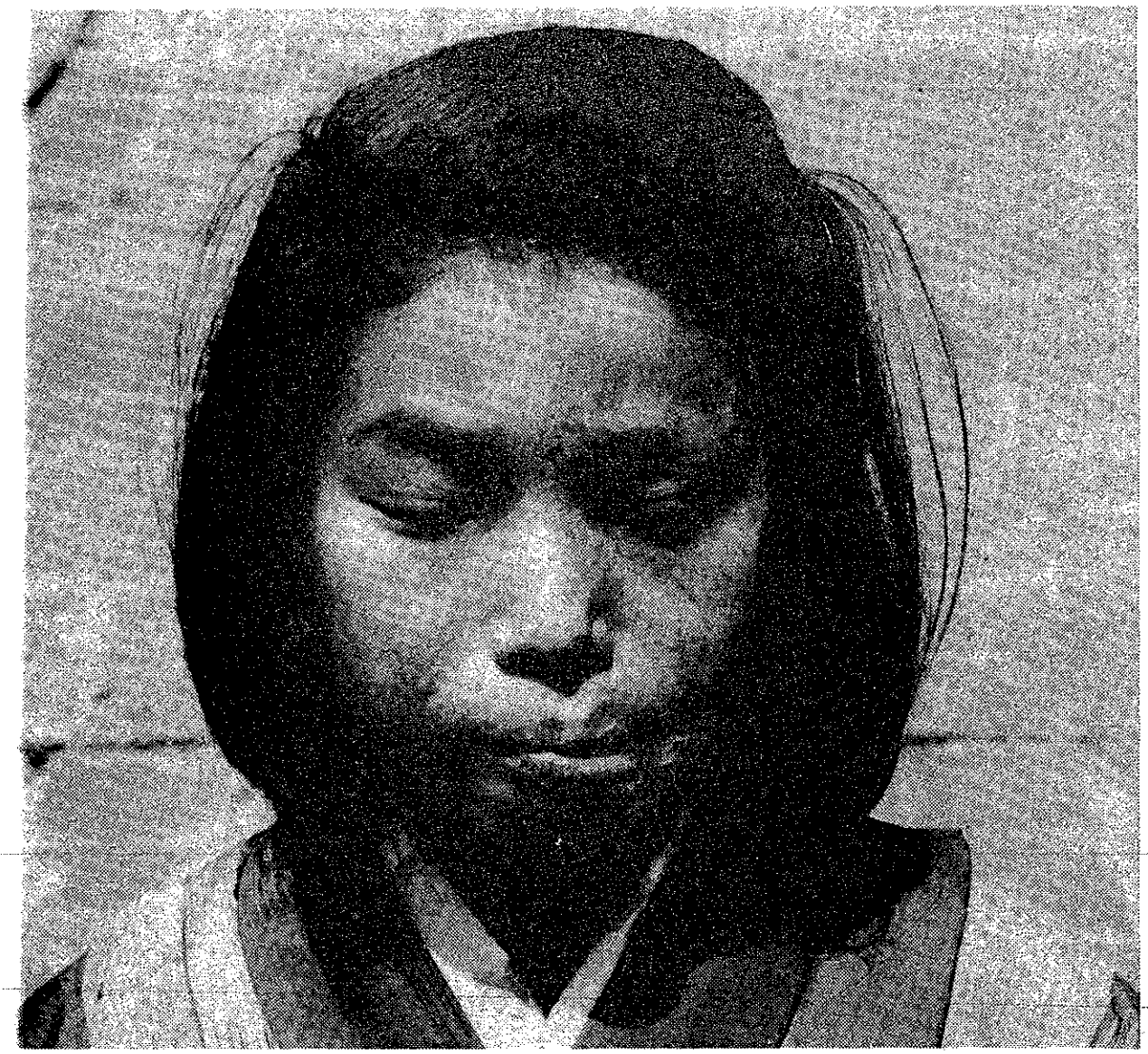
The creation of a nuclear-free zone is most urgent in Korea and the Northwest Pacific, where American and Soviet nuclear forces directly confront each other. China and states throughout the region, most likely in response to popular agitation, could initiate a political and military settlement on the Korean Peninsula, prompting the U.S. to withdraw its nuclear weapons.

Acting in concert, typically in response to popular pressure, Pacific nations can defuse the nuclear time-bomb in the Pacific. Regional initiatives would also help to create a political climate conducive to pressuring the superpowers to first freeze, and then cut deeply their long-range nuclear stockpiles. As the superpowers disengaged, strong regional concert would allow Pacific nations to curtail the emergence of new nuclear-armed regional powers.

The alternatives are stark. One future is a Pacific of heightened tension and risk, ending with visions of scorched, radiating islands and poisoned waters. Or a new Pacific may be forged as people reach across the ocean, from Manila to Suva, from Sydney to Seoul, to form a regional community founded on cooperation, free of the threat of nuclear war.

PART ONE ☆
MANIFEST DESTINY

Atomic bomb victim, Hiroshima, 1947
(Pentagon Archives)



ONE ☆ THE NEW ORDER IN THE PACIFIC

We are now in a favorable position . . . We should get our bases now and plan not for 10 years but for 50–100 years ahead.

—General Leslie Groves,
head of Manhattan Project, 1945[1]

If America wills it so, and constructs several systems of overseas bases, the next war can be broken down into localized conflicts locally dealt with before they spread all over the world . . . Where is the American frontier now? There is no frontier. America fights around the globe.

—George Weller, 1944[2]

America's decisive victory over Japan in World War II ushered in the modern order in the Pacific. For most of the preceding century, the great European powers – Britain, France, Holland, Portugal, Russia – had battled for colonial dominance in the new frontier. Japan had joined their ranks by the turn of the century, the first time the Europeans faced a "great power" challenge from a non-white nation.

The United States had struggled for a toehold in the region since the mid-nineteenth century, when the Navy forcibly "opened" Japan, Okinawa and Korea to commercial trade. With its fabled market and its huge land-mass and population, China was the plum of the would-be conquerors. By 1898 the U.S. had established beachheads in its colonies in Hawaii, Guam, and the Philippines. But until the 1930s and 1940s, American strength rested primarily in its great economic power, and

demands for "open markets" characterized U.S. policy toward the region.[3]

By the 1920s, European control in the Pacific was crumbling in the face of nationalist movements and Japanese militarism. To boost the imperial order, the U.S. undertook a massive program of shipbuilding and naval deployment. Meant to block Japan, the naval race in the Pacific in the late 1930s sparked domestic controversy, since isolationism still dominated American public opinion. As the U.S. was drawn into the Pacific vortex, the Navy wondered if the American people were "ready for the burdens which inevitably would be thrust on them if this nation is to take on the responsibilities for the maintenance of order in the Far East?" Raising a familiar rallying point for America's global "entanglements", the Navy challenged: "Is the United States prepared for a new Manifest Destiny?" [4]

Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 brought forth a resounding "yes" to the Navy's challenge. It was a military disaster: the Japanese bombs missed the new aircraft carriers and struck obsolete battleships. Even worse, the attack shattered the isolationist pressure which had kept the U.S. out of the spiralling war.[5]

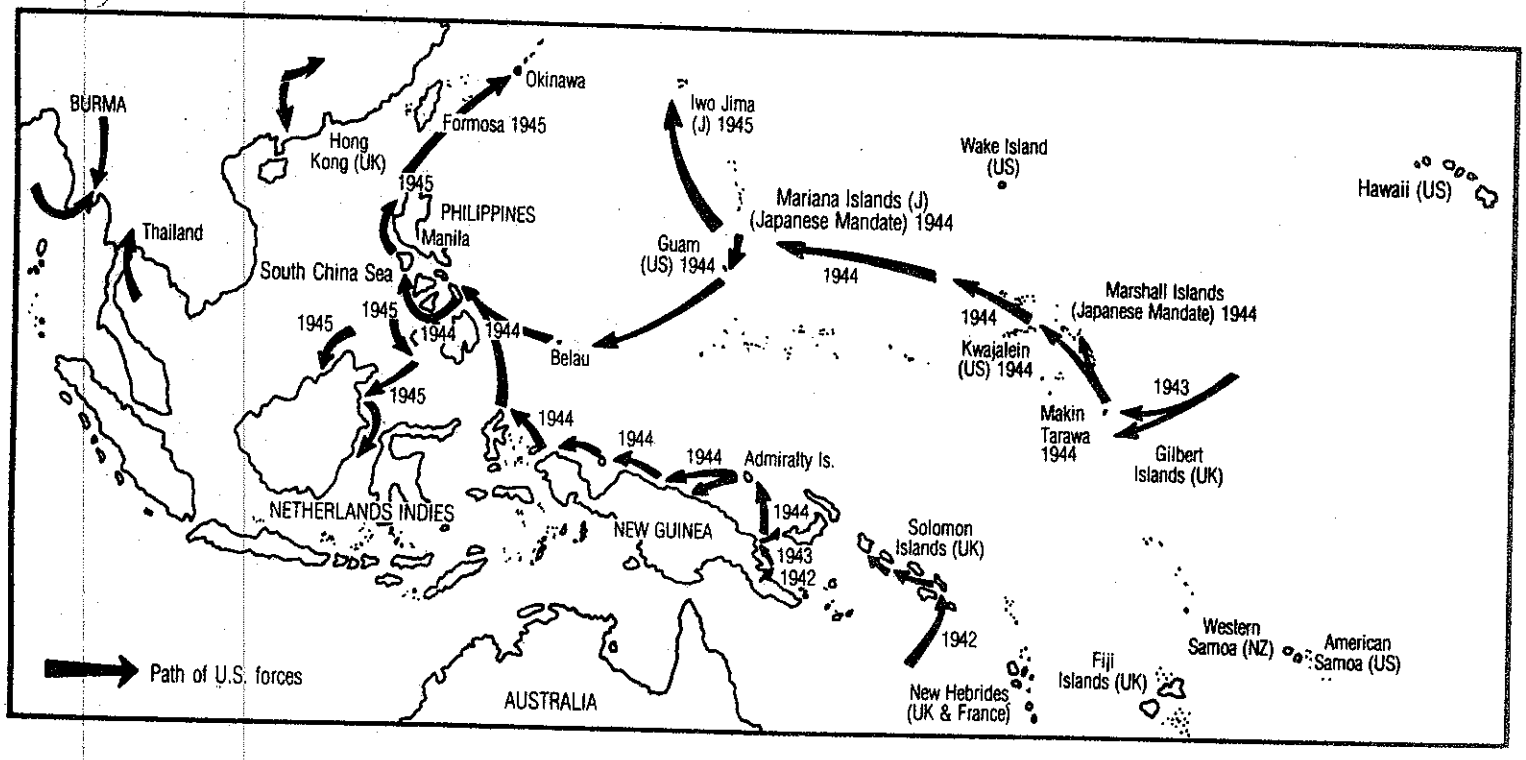
By the end of the war, Japan was in ruins and Europe's colonial hold in the Pacific was mortally wounded. Furthermore, the U.S. had maneuvered to deny the Soviet Union, its ally in the Pacific as in Europe, any role in the post-war occupation of Japan. American military power had triumphed and pervaded the region. Via a frenzy of destruction, the age of imperial rivalry was gone forever. When the new order was constructed after the War, the Pacific would be an American lake.

Frenzy of Destruction

World War II was the greatest naval war in history. To dismember the Japanese empire which extended into the Pacific islands and Southeast Asia, the U.S. adopted an island-hopping strategy which relied on fast-moving carriers and amphibious forces.[6] Born of necessity after the battleships were lost at Pearl Harbor, the strategy called for the U.S. to surround Japan by wresting control of its islands in the west, central and southwest Pacific. U.S. victory in the bloody island battles assured Japanese defeat (see Map 1.1).

Obsessed with the Pacific after the stinging defeat at Pearl Harbor,

Map 1.1:
U.S. Island-hopping Strategy



the U.S. Navy viewed it as the primary front of World War II.[7] Indeed, until 1943 more Americans fought in the Pacific than in the Atlantic theater and 53 per cent of Americans polled in that year thought that Japan was their primary enemy.[8]

World War II was stunning not only for its global scale, but also for its unprecedented brutality and indiscriminate terror against civilians involving nuclear, biological, and chemical warfare. Many millions died under Japanese military rule in the vast concentration camp that was China. In an orgy of violence, Japanese forces slaughtered 250,000 civilians after they captured Nanking in 1938. In another apocalypse, over 160,000 Okinawan civilians who served and shielded Japanese troops were killed by U.S. fire or were forced to commit suicide by their Japanese masters.*

American saturation bombing of Japanese cities matched the Japanese military in ferocity. In a massive raid on Tokyo on March 10, 1945, U.S. bombers directed by General Le May ringed the densely populated Shitamachi District with incendiary bombs. More than 80,000 civilians trapped inside the firestorm burned to death that night.[10] Over 140,000 civilians died in America's nuclear attacks at Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6th and 8th, 1945, acts of such brutality that the neutral Swiss Legation in Tokyo protested to the U.S. State Department that the bomb "constitutes a new crime against humanity and civilization."[11]

Unlike Claude Eatherly, the pilot of the lead plane in the Hiroshima attack who was later consumed by guilt and remorse,[12] General Le May remained unrepentant. Thirty-three years later, he reminisced:

> Killing Japanese didn't bother me very much at that time. It was getting the war over with that bothered me. So I wasn't particularly worried about how many people we killed in getting the job done. I suppose if I had lost the war, I would have been tried as a war criminal. Fortunately we were on the winning side . . .[13]

A frenzy of military base construction, often on the ruins of previous battles, provided the infrastructure for the carnage. The U.S. assault on Guam, for example, reduced the principal cities of Agana, Piti, and

* U.S. and Japanese military casualties in the battle for Okinawa were 50,000 and 110,000 respectively.[9]

Sumay to utter ruins. All dock facilities, the entire water system, and the road system had been destroyed by bombing in July 1944.[14] Within a year, 37,000 U.S. construction troops had erected thirty-six docking piers, numerous bomber hangers and airfields, a 103-mile road network, a vast fuel depot, and over 700 buildings for supply depots.[15]

The Navy's advance bases – airfields in the Southwest Pacific, naval staging areas, and the huge repair and logistics bases – were springboards for the attack on Japan. The bomber which dropped the nuclear bomb on Hiroshima, for example, took off from Tinian in the Marianas Islands, which the U.S. had captured from the Japanese in 1944. Such advance bases were backed by hundreds of other Navy bases. Indeed, Pacific bases accounted for over 90 per cent of all Naval base construction expenditures in World War II. Of the Navy's eighteen "major" bases in 1945, fifteen were in the Pacific.[16]

The abrupt victory over Japan left the U.S. occupying bases in every corner of the Pacific. Planning for post-war bases began in 1942, barely a year into the Pacific War, when Franklin D. Roosevelt requested the Joint Chiefs of Staff to prepare a global study of bases for an "International Police Force."[17] The military complied by presenting JCS (Joint Chiefs of Staff) 570/2 to the President in the autumn of 1943. Reluctant to assume the mantle of a dominant world military and economic power in the pre-war world of the 1930s, the U.S. began planning for its new international posture even before the conflict was over.

"The Base Bible"

Prepared by the Joint Strategic Survey Committee, JCS 570/2 divided the world into three areas: a green-bordered area showing bases in Canada, Greenland, Iceland and other Atlantic locations where the U.S. would have "participating or reciprocal military rights"; a blue-ringed area comprising bases in Alaska, the Philippines, Micronesia, Central America, and the Caribbean, where the U.S. would have "exclusive military rights"; and a black-bordered region including bases in the far Southwest Pacific, Indochina, eastern China, Korea, and Japan, where the U.S. would have "participating rights" as one of the "Great Powers enforcing peace."[18]

JCS 570/2 became the "base bible" which guided the services' think-

ing about post-war deployments. Its adoption marked a definitive break with pre-war isolationism and the acceptance of a global perspective best expressed by General George Marshall, the Army Chief of Staff: "It no longer appears practical to continue what we once conceived as hemispheric defense as a satisfactory basis for our security. We are now concerned with the peace of the entire world. And peace can be maintained only by the strong." [19] Marshall's high-minded argument for a posture of "forward defense" was put in a different light by Secretary of State James Byrnes: "What we must do now is not make the world safe for democracy, but make the world safe for the U.S.A." [20]

Base planning, however, did not stem from military motivation alone. Hand in hand with military requirements in the minds of strategists were the post-war opportunities for U.S. commercial aviation. Post-war basing plans were characterized by the interweaving of military and economic considerations. "The drives for overseas military bases and commercial air facilities reinforced one another," asserts Air Force historian Elliott Converse:

> Open Door economic expansion which had always had a global reach was now joined by a search for physical security not bound by geographical limits . . . Transit rights in North Africa, the Middle East, and South Asia would connect the eastern and western borders of the defense system; they would also promote maintenance of airfields that someday might be used against the Soviet Union. The same air facilities might contribute to achieving economic goals . . . Commercial air rights at Cairo, Karachi, Rangoon, and Bangkok were seen as important links in an air transport route between Europe and the Far East . . . The impetus provided by military and civil aviation thus helps to explain America's outward surge after World War II.[21]

Congressional supporters of maritime interests were also enthusiastic about post-war economic prospects in the Pacific:

> Trade with China and other parts of the Orient, Australia, New Zealand, the Dutch East Indies, and with many islands of the Pacific will unquestionably develop and expand during the postwar era. These areas not only offer many markets for American products but are substantial producers of raw materials useful to our economy . . . Our merchant marine and commercial firms should

be given the opportunity to take over a large portion of that trade formerly handled by the Japanese and their vessels.[22]

One of the most important military offspring of JCS 570/2 was the Navy's "Basic Post War Plan No. 1." Reflecting the re-emergence of the "Asia First" orientation of the admirals, it proposed seventy-five foreign bases, fifty-three in the Pacific and the remainder in the Atlantic. As Converse explains:

> Unlike in the Atlantic, where the most important bases would lie close to home, the pattern of Pacific bases showed that the Navy intended to wield a very big stick in the Far East. In addition to the Philippines, the Navy targeted Guam-Saipan (the Marianas), the Bonin-Volcano, and Ryukyu Islands [Okinawa] for regular operating bases – in other words almost half of the most important Pacific bases . . . Furthermore, the Navy planned to acquire base rights at twenty places in the Black Area ["Required by the U.S. as one of the Great Powers enforcing peace . . ."] – about half in the Southwest Pacific with the remainder in the Far East (e.g., parts of the Netherlands' colonial empire; Bangkok, Thailand; Hainan Island; Formosa; Japan proper; Korea; the Kurile Islands and North China).[23]

In justifying the size of the Navy wish-list, Admiral Horne told Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal: "I wish to point out that we do not necessarily need to have naval shore bases at *all* the sites listed . . . However, for international political and negotiating reasons, we would *ostensibly* plan to establish bases at every island and location that has any real value as a base in our defense concept."[24]

The strategy guiding the U.S. command's proposed basing complex would later be known as forward deployment. Defended by an "outer perimeter" of bases designed to reconnoiter enemy actions and intercept attacks, the "primary bases" would be the fulcrum of American response, supported by "connecting secondary bases" serving as "steppingstones" between the outer-perimeter and primary bases. This network would provide "security in depth, protection to lines of communication and logistic support of operations."[25] The practical effect of this arrangement was "to extend the United States strategic frontier outward to the fringes of Europe, Africa, and Asia."[26]

The Nuclear Imperative

The atomic bomb introduced a new imperative for the acquisition of military bases. As the Joint Strategic Survey Committee (JSSC) of the Joint Chiefs of Staff explained in an October 1945 memorandum:

[T]he importance of adequate bases, particularly in advanced areas, is enhanced by the advent of the new weapons, in that defensively they keep the enemy at a distance, and offensively they project our operations, with new weapons or otherwise, nearer the enemy. The necessity for wide dispersion of naval forces in port as well as at sea, will tend to increase the number and extent of anchorage areas required in our system of bases.[27]

The Committee's report on January 12, 1946, was even more emphatic on the importance of overseas bases "to keep any enemy at a distance":

Since the only known means of defense against the bomb, other than action against its sources, is the interception of its carrier in flight, our national security demands that our defensive frontiers be well advanced in the Atlantic, Pacific, and Arctic regions, and to the southward through a hemispheric defensive structure with our Latin American neighbors, in order to keep any enemy at a distance and to afford every possible opportunity to intercept any hostile move.[28]

Overseas bases, moreover, would draw fire away from the United States. Describing the Navy's thinking on forward bases, *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* stated in July 1947:

These bases may themselves be vulnerable to atomic bomb attack, but so long as they are there, they are not likely to be by-passed. In this respect the advanced base may be likened to pawns in front of the king on a chess-board; meager though their power may be individually, so long as they exist and the king stays severely [sic] behind them, he is safe.[29]

At a press conference shortly after the nuclear attack on Nagasaki in August 1945, General Hap Arnold, Chief of the Army Air Corps, explained the value of Pacific bases in post-war nuclear warfare. American super-bombers, he claimed, could soon drop nuclear bombs any-

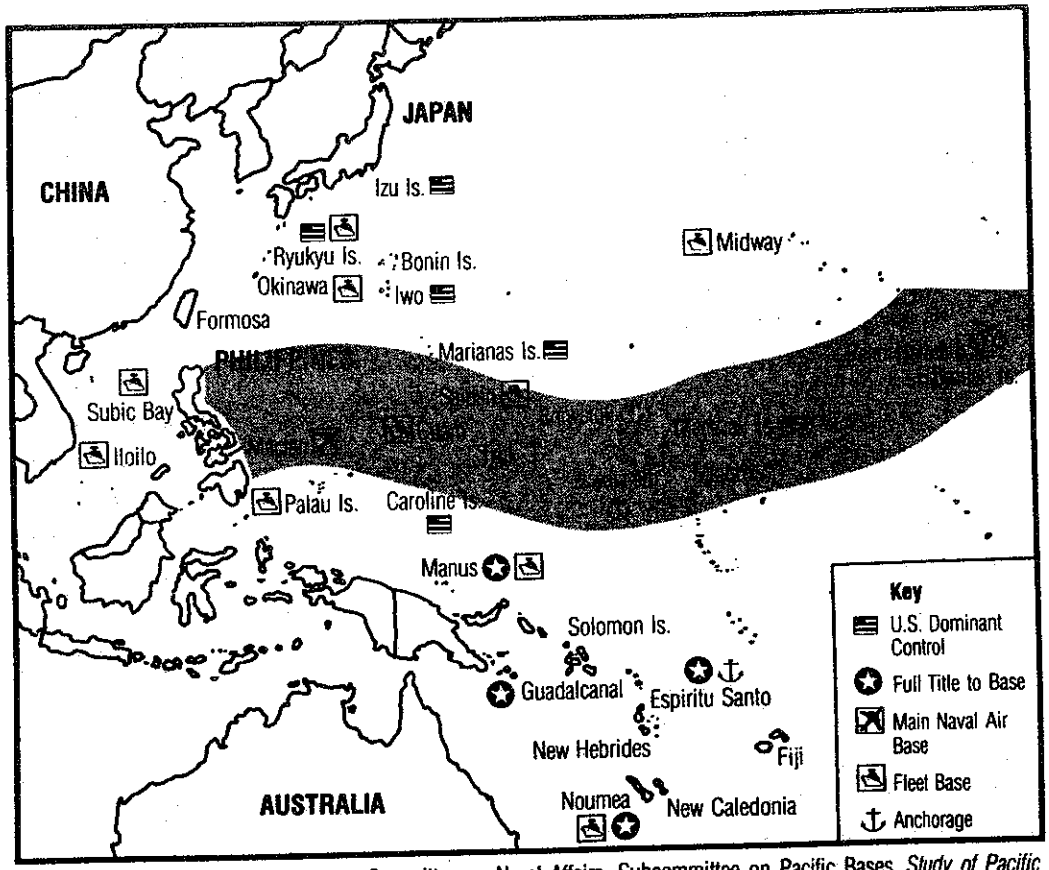
where on the globe. To illustrate his point, Arnold displayed a map of the world showing five circles each of 8,000 km radius (within the projected range of the new bombers). Except for small parts of the Arctic and Antarctic, the bombers could hit the whole earth. Existing U.S. bases near Manila could support such nuclear operations in China and the West Pacific.[30] The Air Force quickly moved beyond speculation. By early 1947, assembly and loading facilities were in place to support nuclear attack in the Far East.[31]

Nine Points of the Law

By late 1945, the military high command had come to the consensus, reflected in the Joint Chiefs of Staff document 570/40, that bases in the Philippines, Marianas, and the Ryukyus would be the most vital in the Pacific. The Joint Chiefs were not particular about the methods of acquiring the bases. While negotiation with other governments was seen as necessary in areas not traditionally under U.S. influence, military occupation was the final arbiter in the Pacific. By the end of World War II, the U.S. military had occupied or built several thousand bases in the Pacific and as the victor, expected to maintain permanent control over many (see Map 1.2). Having defeated or subordinated its former imperial rivals in the Pacific, the U.S. military was in no mood to hand back occupied real estate.

As a Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee put it in 1944: "In many cases, possession will be nine points of the law and present United States occupancy or control of any required base or facility should not be relinquished so long as negotiations for its future use . . . are pending or in process."[32] Operating under this principle, the Navy urged Washington to annex the Marianas and the rest of the Japanese-mandated islands which had been wrested in its bloody wartime approach to the Japanese mainland. However, the Truman administration, sensitive to charges of being branded colonialist at the very time that it was trying to break up the French and British empires, instructed the military to halt further study of annexation in May 1946 and settled for a United Nations-mandated "trusteeship" over the Marianas, the Carolines, and the Marshalls.[33] To all intents and purposes, this trust was annexation, since the United Nations – then controlled by the United States – pro-

Map 1.2:
Post-war Pacific Bases Proposal, 1945



Source: U.S. House of Representatives, Committee on Naval Affairs, Subcommittee on Pacific Bases, *Study of Pacific Bases*, U.S. GPO, Washington, D.C., 1945, p. 102.

vided a mandate which allowed the U.S. unrestricted authority to fortify the "Strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands."

In a speech after his return from the Potsdam Conference in 1945, President Truman made it clear that the mandate system was a cloak for annexation:

> Though the United States wants no territory or profit or selfish advantage out of this war, we are going to maintain the military bases necessary for the complete protection of our interests and of world peace. Bases which our military experts deem to be essential for our protection, we will acquire. We will acquire them by arrangements consistent with the United Nations charter.[34]

Although the U.S. had pledged to give the Philippines independence by 1946, U.S. strategists unanimously agreed on the necessity of keeping bases there. The importance of Philippine bases was underlined in June 1944, four months before General MacArthur's liberation of the Philippines, when the U.S. Congress passed a joint resolution "reserving" air and naval bases after independence from the U.S. in July 1946. The base bible (JCS 570/2) described the role of the Philippines in terms which revealed the global security stance of the U.S.:

> This boundary [the outermost defense line] treats the Philippines as an area from which our Pacific interests may be defended rather than United States territory against which attacks from any direction (except the northern) can be interdicted.[35]

The U.S. threat to withhold post-war reconstruction aid forced the new Philippine Republic to make major military and economic concessions. Faced with the terrible destruction wrought by the war, the Filipino elite had no choice but to give what the U.S. wanted: a rent-free lease for ninety-nine years to twenty-three bases and installations. The most important of these were Subic Naval Base, which became the forward base of the Seventh Fleet, and Clark Air Base, home of the 13th Air Force.

As for Japan, there was no question of the vanquished resisting the demands of the victors for base rights to Okinawa and other Ryukyu islands, as well as the establishment of strategic bases on Japan itself.

The reconstruction of Japan included the establishment of hundreds

of U.S. bases and facilities, some of which were expected to have a long-term presence. A precondition for later normalization of diplomatic relations with Japan was the "presumption that the defeated enemy would 'invite' the United States to station troops on Japanese territory after restoration of sovereignty and that those troops, supported by air and naval power, would have all the facilities and rights of movement they might require to carry out their defensive tasks." [36] The American military presence, including the massive naval complexes at Sasebo and Yokosuka, was legitimized by the U.S.-Japan Peace Treaty of 1951, which also provided for continued U.S. administration of the Bonin (Volcano) Islands and Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa).

From Alliance to Confrontation

As the U.S. moved to impose the post-war *Pax Americana* on the Asia-Pacific region, it found much of the region in a state of civil war and was drawn into intervention on the side of embattled, conservative elites. After using communist Huk guerillas to liberate Manila in 1945, the U.S. Army sided with Philippine conservatives and supported the repression of the armed peasantry.

The Philippine experience was repeated in China. U.S. troops were sent to North China, ostensibly to disarm the Japanese occupation forces, but actually to assist the Nationalist troops of Chiang Kai-shek against the Communist forces led by Mao Tse-tung. The scope of this intervention was revealed by General Albert Wedemeyer, Commander of the China Theater:

> Whole armies, spearheading the reoccupation, were airlifted in American planes to Shanghai, Nanking, and Peiping. From the Pacific came part of the U.S. Seventh Fleet, which later assisted in carrying Chinese troops into northern China, and 53,000 marines who occupied the Peiping–Tientsin area. The air redeployment of the Chinese occupational forces, which was undertaken by the 10th and 14th Air Forces, was unquestionably the largest troop movement by air in the world's history.[37]

When American troops moved in to accept the surrender of Japanese troops in Korea south of the 38th Parallel, they entered a fluid political

situation. At the initiative of the leftist Committee for the Preparation of Korean Independence (CPKI), a Korean People's Republic (KPR) had been founded. The Republic, notes Asia scholar Bruce Cumings,

> did far better than any other Koreans in the south in laying the groundwork for sovereignty in terms of organization, mobilization, and the delineation of national goals . . . All this proceeded in spite of the opposition of Japanese, and subsequently American, central authorities.[38]

Aware of its revolutionary identity, the Americans dismantled the new republic in the South, harassed the left, and erected a governing bureaucracy around conservative politician Syngman Rhee.

American backing of right-wing forces reflected a transition in foreign policy from the "internationalism" of President Roosevelt to the hardline "containment" of Harry Truman. For Roosevelt, revolutionary anti-colonial movements were not anathema, but they had to be channelled in "responsible" directions through "multilateral trusteeships" dominated by the great powers, including the Soviet Union. Roosevelt anticipated that the partnership with the Soviet Union would outlast the war and was the best way of making the Soviets "responsible members of a new international system." As Cumings points out, this was a variety of containment – "but instead of drawing the lines in the dirt, this sort of containment policy embraced and enrolled the adversary in mutually beneficial relationships."[39] With Roosevelt dead and his vision gone, U.S. foreign policy began a troubled journey toward a hardline confrontational crusade against communism which would come to be called the Cold War.

George Kennan, an expert on Soviet affairs who headed the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department, was a key figure in transforming U.S. foreign policy in the years after Roosevelt's death. He articulated his rationale for confrontational globalism in the famous "Mr. X" article he wrote for *Foreign Affairs* in July 1947: "[T]he main element of any United States policy toward the Soviet Union must be that of a long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies."[40]

In moving containment from ideology to policy, Truman, Kennan, and the post-war U.S. leadership confronted strong domestic opposition. With the coming of the peace, the isolationists renewed their bitter opposition to international commitments, especially to the large-scale

aid which would be needed to "contain" the Soviets. Equally threatening to the advocates of this new policy were pressures for demobilization which had led to riots and demonstrations, from London to Manila, by ordinary GIs resentful of an officer corps that wanted "to keep playing war." [41]

In short, the Truman administration faced the same dilemma that had stymied Roosevelt on the eve of World War II: with limited troops and finances, it had to order its priorities. And the choice was the same as that made by Roosevelt: "Europe First", a strategic decision that the Truman Administration set forth in National Security Council Memorandum 48/1:

> Since . . . the primary strategic interests and war objectives of the United States consistent with the destruction of the enemy's means to wage war are not now in Asia, the current basic concept of strategy in the event of war with the USSR is to conduct a strategic offense in the "West" and a strategic defense in the "East" . . . As a primary matter in the event of war, it is essential that a successful strategic defense in the "East" be assured with a minimum expenditure of military manpower and material in order that the major effort may be expended in the "West." In order to gain freedom of access to the Asian continent within these limitations, the United States must now concentrate its efforts on bringing to bear such power as can be made available, short of the commitment of United States military forces, in those areas which will show the most results in return for the United States effort expended.[42]

The Offshore Island Strategy

Where were these areas of concentration? General Douglas MacArthur, described as "probably the most important individual formulator of American ideas concerning strategy in the Far East," [43] defined the first significant approach to the problem. Then serving as Supreme Commander of Allied Forces in Japan, MacArthur advanced the concept of an "offshore island perimeter": "Our line of defense runs through the chain of islands fringing the coast of Asia. It starts from the Philippines and continues through the Ryukyu Archipelago, which includes its main bastion, Okinawa. Then it bends back through Japan and the Aleutian Island chain, to Alaska." [44] Deployed along this

island chain, "air striking power" would be able to effectively cover the whole East Asian mainland.[45]

George Kennan, the State Department's Euro-centric proponent of containment, agreed with the Asia-oriented MacArthur. After a meeting between them in early 1948, Kennan wrote:

> We should recognize that our influence in the Far Eastern area in the coming period is going to be primarily military and economic . . . We should make a careful study to see what parts of the Pacific and Far Eastern world are absolutely vital to our security, and we should concentrate our policy on seeing to it that those areas remain in hands which we can control or rely on. It is my own guess, on the basis of such study as we have given the problem so far, that Japan and the Philippines will be found to be the cornerstones of such a Pacific security system and that if we can continue to retain effective control over these areas there can be no serious threat to our security from the East within our lifetime.[46]

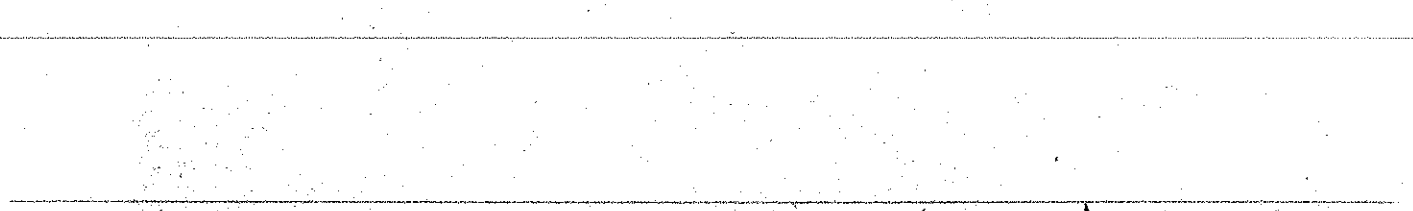
Kennan and MacArthur's strategy came to be known as the "minimum position." By relying on the island-chain strategy, the United States would be "able to apply pressure on fronts at times of its own choosing rather than spreading itself thin in reacting to every threat posed by the Soviets." The "Asian offshore island chain," asserted the National Security Council, would be "our first line of offense from which we may seek to reduce the area of Communist control, using whatever means we can develop, without, however, using sizable United States armed forces."[47]

Air power was seen to be the key to controlling the mainland. American strategists saw the atomic bomb as a key weapon to contain the Chinese Communists without necessitating "sizable United States armed forces." This faith in the bomb was reflected by General Omar Bradley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who stated in 1949: "I am wondering whether we shall ever have another amphibious operation. Frankly, the atomic bomb, properly delivered, precludes such a possibility."[48]

The political correlates of this military posture were laid out by Kennan in a February 1948 policy review. His first recommendation was that the U.S. "liquidate as rapidly as possible our unsound commitments in China and . . . recover, *vis à vis* that country, a position of detachment and freedom of action."[49] This was quite clearly a prescrip-

tion for unloading Chiang Kai-shek and the Nationalist Chinese, then on the verge of defeat. He also suggested that the U.S. "devise policies with respect to Japan which assure the security of those islands . . . and which will permit the economic potential of that country to become again an important force in the Far East." His final recommendation was "to shape our relationship to the Philippines in such a way as to permit to the Philippine Government a continued independence in all internal affairs but to preserve the archipelago as a bulwark of U.S. security in the area." [50]

Barely a year after it was adopted as policy, the offshore island strategy was effectively abandoned, torpedoed by three momentous developments: the elevation of containment from strategy to ideology, the backlash from the "loss of China", and the Korean War.



Nuclear-capable B-36 bomber landing at Yokota, Japan,
for Operation Big Stick, August 26, 1953
(Strategic Air Command)